المجلس الاسلامي
Islamic Council

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## A FAKE DEMOCRACY

The results of the elections in Egypt have surprised no-one. By blatant manoeuvring and patently undemocratic methods the Egyptian regime had predetermined them. Indeed, most observers of the political scene in Egypt had forecast the results weeks in advance.

The opposition in Egypt has long protested that there can be no free and fair elections under a system dominated by emergency laws.

The truth is that there are certain prerequisites for a democracy and for free and fair elections, and that the present Egyptian regime has never met these essentials.

- Under a democratic system, every individual must have not only the right to vote but also to be a candidate in the elections . In these elections, candidates could be put forward only through political parties, and parties could only be established with the approval of a governmental committee, which means in effect the governing party, which means the National Democratic Party.

- Free and fair elections pre-suppose a free press and the right to publish newspapers. In Egypt newspapers can only be established with the permission of a governmental committee. Since the nationalisation of the press under Nasser, the newspaper industry in Egypt has been government property. By and large this situation continues.

- Another prerequisite is the freedom to hold public meetings. This right remained severely restricted in Egypt right up to the elections.

- Finally, there must be fair time given on the mass media - radio and television - to all parties. But in Egypt, the government controls and uses the media to project and publicise the government, the Ministers, the President. The time given to the opposition during the recent campaign was farcical, to say the least.

By legalising the rigging of the elections, the Egyptian government is driving the people to use other means to rid Egypt of a regime that has flouted the principles of democracy and free and fair elections.

Fully aware that it would not be allowed to speak the truth in Egypt, the Islamic Council from London condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the means employed by the government to rig the elections and the cynical lip-service it pays to the word "democracy". Nevertheless, the Egyptian people are struggling for freedom, for sovereignty of the law and for respect of human rights. And the wind of change is blowing in Egypt and shall not be stopped.

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